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LETTERS TO A FRIEND,

TOUCHING THE LATE PASTORAL

OF THE

RIGHT REV. BISHOP POTTER.

BY

W. A. MUHLENBERG.

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## LETTERS, ETC.

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### No. I.

MY DEAR DOCTOR: You see I have not been in haste to cross the wishes of yourself and others of my good friends, who have importuned me to make no public rejoinder to the recent Pastoral Letter of my diocesan. I have weighed what you and they have urged with a kindness and earnestness hard to be resisted. I have taken sufficient time for deliberation. Impulse has subsided, but convictions remain, and I cannot see that I ought to be silent. Independently of other considerations to which I would not affect indifference, you must allow me to say that, in my humble judgment, the Pastoral is calculated to do harm to our Church. It sets her in a false attitude toward surrounding Christians. It attributes an exclusiveness which does not belong to her, and puts her ministers in an ecclesiastical bondage foreign to her spirit, and not imposed by her laws. The absence of any remonstrance on the part of those who have given occasion to the document could be construed only as an assent to its doctrines. Accordingly they have made their replies, and now, seeing I am "in the same condemnation," there is no reason why I should refrain, unless I would seem wanting in sympathy with their justification both of themselves and their Church.

I deprecate myself, as heartily as you can for me, any open antagonism to my Bishop, although entirely free from all personal feelings. But how is it to be avoided? The Pastoral is unmistakable in its meaning and intent. Besides its implications, which cannot be granted, it is a sort of Manifesto of the policy, in the premises, to be pursued in this diocese. The last number of the *Church Review* says: "This Pastoral has a history, and is one of the most important documents ever issued by an American Bishop." In some respects it is so, and if so, it must be treated accordingly. It challenges attention. With all

the respect and esteem due to its author, which none accord more sincerely than myself, it is a fair subject for public examination, and must be tried on the ground of its own merits.

First of all, it was premature. The alleged evils which called it forth were evils in a family—in a household of the Church. They were confined to a very few, and were only beginning to make trouble. Might they not, then, at least at first, have been amicably discussed within doors? Might there not have been private opportunities for mutual explanations? Should processes of law have been hinted at so soon? Those brothers of the family “who feel themselves aggrieved by practices at variance, as they believe, with the laws and usages of the Church,” and of whom the Bishop hopes that they “will not make those practices the subject of a formal complaint”—suppose they had been brought together, with their brothers who grieved them, in a friendly way, at the father’s house, to talk over matters, and to understand one another, would the former still have thought only of a legal prosecution? or if after such a conference they did not agree, could they have been still so unbrotherly as not to submit their differences to an umpire of one or two judicious elders, whose sentence hardly would have been, that the offenders should receive a public reprimand from the Bishop?

Among the reasons which the author of the Pastoral gives for its appearance one is, “because he has been appealed to by both clergymen and laymen to do something to check what seems a growing evil.” This reason would have been more satisfactory, if it had said of the appealing clergymen and laymen, that, beside not being “busybodies and censorious,” they were impartial judges and unprejudiced by their modes of thinking on the questions concerned. The Bishop has never shown himself a partisan in any of his actions toward his clergy. He has been remarkably impartial. It is to be regretted, in the present case, that there is room to fear that he has yielded to one-sided counsel.

“Above all,” he says, giving the chief reason for the Pastoral, “because he hopes that there are those who may have acted hastily, and who upon a candid and serious review of their obligations and duties will change their views of what it is right for them to do as Ministers of the Church,” etc. Doubtless this hope is sincere, but is it founded on a knowledge of human nature? When men have acted hastily and have been unmindful of their obligations, are they likely to review them candidly and seriously,

and to change their views in consequence of being lectured on the subject before the world? Rather, are they not closed against what private appeal might have left them open to, and roused to say all they can in their defence? A father would hardly think of amending a son by putting his faults in pamphlet or newspaper, though he might do it in the sweetest manner possible.

The Pastoral, indeed, imputes nothing directly to any one.\* But does it mean to impute nothing? If so, then what is its significance? What cause has there been for it? If its purpose, or one of its purposes, be not to censure, and censure severely, certain acts of certain persons, every body mis-reads it. But it is plain enough. Every body perceives what is aimed at in its abstractions, its hypotheses, its hints, and (I can think of no better word) its insinuations. It might just as well have said, A, B, and C, having done so and so, have violated promises made with all the sanctity

\* Except to myself, and that it does, on a minor point indeed, but very directly. In regard to the preaching of the Rev. Dr. Schaff, in the Church of the Holy Communion, it says: "Certainly the specious plea urged on that occasion will never be admitted again by the present Bishop." The specious plea was this: For some time I had thought it would be a good thing to give our Churches, when not otherwise used, on Sunday evenings, for sermons by native German preachers, with the view of inducing the attendance of some of that large portion of our German population neglecting public worship altogether. Many who send their children to our Sunday-schools, will not themselves come to Church. I believed that if special efforts were made to bring them, not just to Mission Halls, with which their foreign feelings won't associate the ideas of worship, but to our goodly sanctuaries, giving them a cordial American welcome there, putting our organs in the hands of their countrymen to lead them in chorales of their fatherland—by such means I believed something might be done in bringing them to hear earnest preachers of their own, not as of any one denomination, but as Evangelists declaring to them the Gospel, the same in Germany and America. Full of my scheme for a German Lecture, I went to the Bishop for his approval of it, proposing to make a beginning in the Church of the Holy Communion. He assented to it, without any pressing on my part, or hesitation on his. I left him gratified with his readiness in the matter. As he now says he "gave a bare assent," I must suppose that he did, but that he was urged by any specious plea I cannot admit. He knows how careful I was to adhere to the understanding that the church should be considered as loaned for the occasion, for I afterward informed him that I had declined the offer of one of our clergymen to read the Evening Prayer in German, before Dr. Schaff's sermon, that there might be none of the intermingling of services to which he objected. I made use of no pretext; I was open and straightforward throughout.

Some three months afterward the Bishop, at my request, allowed the use of the same church, for a sermon by a German Lutheran divine, who then thought of coming into our Church. The purpose, a special one, was approved by the Bishop, but no specious plea was urged.



of an oath, and this moreover it would have the world to understand. What else is to be inferred from that citation of the ordination vows, and of that emphatic reminder of the solemn circumstances under which they were made? If this was intended only for the clergy, it was superfluous. A simple reference to what they are so familiar with, would have been sufficient. It is spread before the public eye, and wherefore? No caveat appears against the conclusion too obvious not to be drawn. Suppose now that some one not of our Church, yet on friendly terms with the Bishop, after reading the Pastoral in one of the journals of the day, should say to him, "It must be exceedingly painful to you, sir, to find that any of your clergy, especially those who have stood so well in the public estimation, can yet be so deficient as you have shown them to be in moral principle. You have made it plain that after swearing to do one thing, they have done another. We are accustomed to look up to the Episcopal clergy as gentlemen of a nice sense of honor; it seems there are exceptions, and these where they might have been least expected"—would not the Bishop at once have disclaimed such an inference of his friend? Would he not tell him that he did not rightly apprehend the case, and then proceed to inform him that the brethren censured for infringing certain laws of the Church contend for a construction of those laws which allowed them the liberty in which they had indulged with a good conscience? "I cannot admit their construction," the Bishop would say; "but neither would I question their honesty in maintaining it. It was my duty to expose the illegality of their acts, but without intending to impeach their regard for their sacred word. They are good men and true, only they have very wrong notions on some important points, which, however, are not entirely novel in our Communion." Doubtless, something like this would have been the apology of our good father for his erring sons to an outsider in private. Why then is it so wholly wanting when he arraigns them before the outside world? Could *no salvo* be imagined which would have been really in that conciliatory spirit in which the Pastoral would not appear wanting? With all its kindness, there is rather a stint of the charity which, believing all things, might have believed, and ingenuously have expressed the belief, in some sincere and reasonable plea, mitigating the fault of the asserted transgressions. Certainly the following are not the palliations of charity: "The Church will endure no trifling with what upon indubitable evidence she avers to be the

truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth of God." Of course it is implied that there has been such trifling, or why speak of it? "Violation of obligations so solemnly assumed." "Gross innovation and flagrant violation of the spirit and intent of our law." "Disobedience to laws to which we have given our assent—disobedience to the laws of that spiritual household of which we are members—is enough to vitiate any course of action, however, in other respects, it may commend itself to certain amiable feelings of our nature." "If while we rush out of our legitimate sphere, and violate the laws of that sphere, we create division in the circle where our first duties are appointed," etc. "The mere promptings of sentiment and self-will, which disregard the paramount obligations of obedience, can never be really useful, can never be entitled to respect." These are not set down as independent truisms. They have their application, which nobody misunderstands; but not a word is interposed to soften that application.

Had we been tried and sentenced to an admonition by the Bishop, it would have been administered, I trow, in no stronger terms than the language above quoted, and that in private. Strange that, without a trial, we are thus admonished in public.

So much for some of the accidents of the Pastoral. I will proceed, as briefly as possible, to examine its substance.

## No. II.

The main purport of the Pastoral is this: No clergyman of our Church is at liberty to admit a preacher who has not had Episcopalian orders to preach to his congregation, or himself to preach to a non-Episcopalian congregation without also conducting worship at the same time according to the Book of Common Prayer, or in public worship in his own church to use any prayers but those in said book. None of these three things can he do without incurring the guilt of violating his ordination vows. Such is obviously the burden of the document. I meet it by denying that the ordination vows touch any one of the aforesaid points. Let us look at them. The only two that are relevant are those adduced in the Pastoral, the first of which is this: "I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salva-

tion; and *I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrines and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.*" As no fault is intimated in regard to the Holy Scriptures or the doctrines of the Church, we are concerned only to inquire, What is that conformity to the worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church to which we are thus solemnly engaged? Of course it is conformity to that order of worship which is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. But when is that conformity required? Evidently on all the occasions for which the book is designed—and what those occasions, are plainly appears from the book itself. It appoints not only what the minister, but also what the people, shall say and do; accordingly, they must be people more or less used to the book. The service which it ordains cannot be offered by a minister alone, for thus offered it would not be the worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church. In order to be that, it must be a joint service of the minister and people, which requires that the people take their part, of course knowing what their part is. In other words, there must be a congregation of this Church. A minister celebrating divine service in such a congregation, and on the occasions contemplated in the book, is bound to conform to its prescribed order. There are occasions of divine service which the book has not provided for, or not in any adequate degree, such as Sunday-school and Missionary meetings, laying of the corner-stones of churches, private funeral services, not to speak of household devotions, prayer with the sick and bereaved, etc. For such purposes no one contends that he is restricted exclusively to the Liturgy. This is seen by the numerous manuals of Family Prayers, Clergymen's Companions, etc. But it is too evident to be further argued, that the required conformity is that which has been stated. The clergyman who, Sunday after Sunday, year in and year out, conducts the regular services of his church according to the order of the Prayer-Book, fulfils his obligation to "conform to the worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church." Whether or not he does any thing over and above that order, so as it be not contrary to it in doctrine or spirit—whether or not he uses the Liturgy when he preaches to congregations not of this Church, are questions wide of the point in hand. They do not touch it one way or the other. So long as he complies with the rubric,\* he may pour out his heart with and for his people as often as he

\* The canon will be attended to hereafter; we are concerned now with the ordination promise.



is moved thereto—he may discourse in “meeting-houses” without uttering a collect from the Liturgy, and yet be a strict conformist to the worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church. I am not saying what a true affection for the Liturgy might more or less dictate when he is not bound to use it, but only what he is at liberty to do, and yet keep within the line of his duty.

The other promise adduced by the Pastoral it thus quotes: “Then in the midst of the service of ordination, as we stood before the Bishop and the Holy Table, we were asked :

“ ‘Will you then give your faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and Sacraments and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and *as this Church hath received the same*, according to the Commandments of God, so that you may teach the people committed to your care and charge, to keep and observe the same?’ ”

“To which each of us deliberately replied, ‘*I will so do by the help of the Lord.*’ ” \*

The italics are in the Pastoral. Here observe that the words, “as this Church hath received the same,” refer as much to the doctrines and Sacraments, as to the discipline of Christ, though, if I mistake not, the Pastoral would confine them to the latter, to favor the view which it takes of the discipline of Christ. There

\* I have transferred the above in full from the Pastoral to show how the same, *mutatis mutandis*, may be said of another occasion of solemn vows—thus :

Then in the midst of the service of *Confirmation*, as we stood before the Bishop and the Holy Table, we were asked: “Do ye here in the presence of God, and this congregation, renew the *solemn promise and vow* that ye made, or that was made in your name at your baptism; ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging yourselves *bound to believe and to do all those things* which ye then undertook, or your sponsors undertook for you?” To which each of us deliberately answered, “I do. Our help is in the name of the Lord,” etc.

Is not here as much of an oath, and one as sacred and binding, as any at ordination? The Bishop knows how it is kept. He looks around and sees the conformity to “the vain pomp and glory of the world, and to the covetous desires of the same,” on the part of so many who have sworn to renounce them. He sees what numbers of his baptized and confirmed flock are immersed in the sins and follies of the world, more the servants of Satan than those faithful soldiers and servants of Christ which they were signed and sealed to be. Does not such disregard of sacred engagements equally, at least, call for a Pastoral? Would not the clergy be thankful for it as an aid in rebuking the inconsistent lives of their communicants?

Well would it be for the Church, and her ministry too, if the vows of Baptism, Confirmation, and of that great oath, the *Sacrament* of the Holy Supper, were kept as faithfully as the ordination vows

is little hazard in saying that it understands "the discipline of Christ as this Church hath received the same" to include Episcopal government and ordination. This appears from its words, which immediately follow our last quotation from it: "Let us now see what are the doctrines, discipline, and worship of this Church," etc. Here "the discipline of this Church" is quietly substituted for "the discipline of Christ as this Church hath received the same," as if the two were identical; but they are not. The former is ecclesiastical, the latter is evangelical. The former embraces the whole system of the polity, government, and order of the Church—its laws, canons, and rubrics, all which no one pretends have been received from Christ in like manner as His doctrine and Sacraments have been received. The discipline of Christ is guidance, warning, and teaching, according to His precepts. It is the application of His Gospel as a rule of life. It is "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This the pastor is to minister to the people "committed to his care and charge with all diligence." But what has this to do with his occasionally letting his people hear a sermon from a non-Episcopal preacher? A great deal, some may answer, since a faithful shepherd will protect his flock against the "thieves and robbers that climb up some other way." This is a good answer for those who believe that all non-Episcopal preachers are such thieves and robbers. But we don't all hold to that faith; not a few of us believe that among them are many true shepherds in other fields of the great flock, with whom it is not strange that we should show our fellowship. We cannot, for our lives, see how in doing so we violate any of our solemn obligations.

Enough has now been said to substantiate my denial that the ordination promises touch any of the three things charged against us.

The Pastoral proceeds in words already quoted: "Let us now see what are the doctrines, discipline, and worship of the Church, to which with so much solemnity we promised conformity at our ordination."

The *doctrines* of the Church. "Let us see what they are," says the Pastoral. But that is the first and last of all reference to them, except the doctrine of the three orders, and that, indeed, is dwelt upon and magnified as if it were *articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiæ*. In the array of documents presented, none relate to the doctrines of the Church. How is this? Are doc-

trines of so little consequence? Are they of inferior moment to worship, that is, the order of worship—or to discipline? The first Bishops, in their letters, for one word about worship or Church discipline, have a hundred or a thousand about doctrine. Wherefore so remarkable an omission in this Episcopal letter? Not because its author undervalues the importance of the subject omitted—by no means; but because he is so entirely satisfied that there is no occasion for him to dwell upon it—because he has no suspicions whatever in regard to the faith and doctrine of the brethren in question. He has no charges to bring against them of heterodoxy or heresy, of rationalism or naturalism, of any of the subtle forms of infidelity under the guise of enlightened Christianity. In these and all like points they are unimpeachable. This ought to weigh greatly in their favor. It might outweigh the worst that is preferred against them if the sum total of Gospel doctrine—in nothing of which they are at fault—be of more gravity than any matters of ecclesiastical order. It might, without the persuasion of the Bishop, stay the proceedings of those aggrieved brethren who are so eager to bring them to trial. “Well, after all,” they might say, “these lawless brothers of ours, come up to the mark in ninety-nine points out of a hundred, including the mint, anise, and cummin, as well as the weightier matters of the law.” It ought also to be a great comfort to the Bishop himself to think that even the most disorderly of his clergy are, nevertheless, all right in the great purpose of their ministry. Such would have satisfied an original apostle. A man sound in faith, doctrine, and morals, must have done something a little worse, I ween, than aught akin to the provocatives of the Pastoral, to provoke a censure before the Church from a Paul or a John. But different folks see things with different eyes.

So let us go on. We are next confronted with the preface to the Ordinal—that strong reliance for proof that our Church denies the authority of all non-Episcopal ministrations. It will be sufficient to quote its conclusion: “No man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in this Church, *or suffered to execute any of the said functions*, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereto, according to the form hereinafter following, or hath had Episcopal consecration or ordination.” The words italicized are generally understood to mean that no man shall be suffered to execute any of the functions of a bishop,

priest, or deacon, unless, etc. Such is not the sense. It does not consist with a grammatical construction of the passage. "Said functions" must have an antecedent, which is "bishop, priest, or deacon," consequently "functions" must signify offices; and such is one of the primary meanings of the word with our best lexicographers. The sense then is, "No man shall be suffered to execute the office of a bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church, unless," etc., which is a different thing from his not being suffered to execute any of the functions of a bishop, etc. Preaching is one of the functions of each of the three orders named—but it does not necessarily belong to those orders. A man may preach every day of his life and be never a bishop, priest, or deacon. He may hold the office of a prophet, evangelist, or teacher—offices named as divers forms of the ministry in the New Testament much more distinctly than those of bishops, priests, and deacons. These latter may be also prophets, evangelists, or teachers, while they may or may not be so in virtue of their episcopal, their presbyterial, or diaconal, which may be called their ecclesiastical office. If we admit this distinction between the ecclesiastical and the evangelistic office, all our difficulties will be removed. Episcopal and non-Episcopal ministers, who are true preachers of the Lord Jesus Christ, have a character in common over and above that which they hold in their respective churches—that of evangelists; and it is that wherein they appear when they officiate in one another's churches. When Dr. Adams preached, on Easter evening, in the Church of the Ascension, he was not regarded, nor did he regard himself, as executing the office of a bishop, priest, or deacon—certainly not of a bishop, priest, or deacon of this Church; nor did he officiate distinctively as a Presbyterian minister, for he would carefully have avoided teaching any distinctive Presbyterian doctrine. He was there in an office in which he and the Rector of the Ascension are on a level, yet a higher one than that of bishop, in so far as it is more indubitably of Divine origin. It is difficult to see how, on the ground of the declaration in the preface to the Ordinal, he should have been excluded. Not that that esteemed brother had intimated a desire to preach in any of our churches—on the contrary, he yielded to an earnest request of Dr. Smith and myself, soliciting his services, at the time above mentioned, as a special favor.

The declaration in the Ordinal may be more briefly disposed of by understanding it as referring to settled or continued office in



the Church, as if it said, "No man shall *hold* the office of bishop, priest, or deacon in the Church, unless," etc. It means that episcopal ordination shall always be required in the established ministry of this Church.

The first, fifth, and ninth canons which follow in the Pastoral need not detain us. They are quoted to show how exclusively the Church holds to Episcopal ordination for her own ministry, which none of us deny or would have otherwise. I shall have something to say about the other canons which seem more to the point.

### No. III.

A remark toward the end of my last might seem derogatory to the office of a Bishop. What I meant was, that as the office of preacher of the Gospel was more certainly appointed by our Lord than the office of Diocesan Bishop, which I suppose every body will grant, the former is *so far* the higher office. The great and chief office of the Apostles was to preach the Gospel. So St. Paul thought. Bringing men to the knowledge of Christ is a work superior to that of governing as a Bishop. It was, however, sufficient for my argument to say that a non-Episcopal minister might simply preach the Gospel in our Church and yet not "execute the office of a bishop, priest, or deacon" therein. This the highest Churchman might allow, while Low Churchmen, so far as I am aware, do not propose any thing more than what we call an "exchange of pulpits," with their orthodox brethren of other denominations, on suitable occasions, to show their oneness with them in the "testimony of Jesus." This would be a step toward union, involving no surrender of principle in any quarter. We have Gospel ground, if not Church ground, in common. Let us get as near together as we can on the former, and we shall be in a position to see how far we can unite on the latter.

The Eleventh Canon says: "No person shall be permitted to officiate in any congregation of this Church without first producing the evidence of his being a minister thereof to the minister, or, in case of vacancy or absence, to the Churchwardens, Vestrymen, or Trustees of the congregation." Evidently this law is not meant for universal and literal application, for if it be, it is for ever being broken. None of us dare preach for a brother without producing to him our letters of Orders—we could never make exchanges without carrying them in our pockets. Obviously the

Canon is designed to meet special cases, namely, those of persons presenting themselves to officiate in a congregation of this Church (implied in the words, "No person shall be *permitted* to officiate," etc.,) about whom there is doubt, whether they be ministers of this Church. Such may reasonably be required to show proof of the questioned fact; but how can this be required of persons who preach not at their own instance, but at that of the minister of the congregation, and of whom it is known that they are *not* ministers of this Church? Certainly we should not ask non-Episcopal clergymen to prove that they are ministers of this Church, but this canon obliges us to ask it of those whom it has in view. Plainly, then, it cannot have non-Episcopal ministers in view. It has no bearing whatever on the preaching of persons to congregations of this Church, at the *request* of the ministers thereof. "The history of the Canon," as Dr. Smith observes in his able and learned *Plea for Liberty in the Church*,\* "shows that it was originally

\* Referring with admiration to Dr. Smith's pamphlet, I do so, however, with an important exception. It speaks with satisfaction of the sanction given to the Greek service in Trinity Chapel. It thinks that service was quite allowable. To this I cannot assent, however much it may favor the liberty we are contending for. The Pastoral repeatedly refers to the Principles as well as the Laws of the Church. If the latter are to be found in the Canons, the former or some of them, and those of the first importance, are to be found in the XXXIX Articles. Now the XXIVth of these Articles, says: "It is plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the church, or to minister the sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people." The Greek service in Trinity Chapel was in a tongue "not understood of the people," not understood even by the few Russians who were present, and for whom it was especially designed, not understood by the respondents, who were drilled by a clergyman of our Church to the vocalization of unknown sounds. The whole, to the mass of the congregation, was a dumb show, and so contrary to another of the Articles (XXV) which declares that "the sacraments were not ordained to be gazed upon." If ever the Holy Sacrament was gazed upon, it was on that occasion, when, as was anticipated by the managers, a congregation came only in the character of spectators, to some of whom, in the expectation of a crowd at the spectacle, tickets of invitation were sent, to reserved seats. It was a performance of the Holy Communion, if it was that ordinance at all, seeing there were no communicants—not even the clergy who were with the priest in the chancel, sometimes, I understand, on their knees. He received alone. This our Church forbids, and so another of her principles was violated. She will not allow of solitary communion, as may be seen in the rubrics of the Office of the Communion of the Sick. The Articles of the Creed, it may be presumed, are hardly less than principles of the Church, yet we know how one of them was disposed of in that extraordinary service. Nevertheless the Bishop tells us it had his cordial approval, without, however,

designed to protect our congregations from impostors pretending to be ministers of this Church, and that there was no intention to make it exclusive in the sense now attributed to it." If it was, it is strange that so many of our Bishops and clergy, some of whom had a hand in making the law, were not aware of that intention, as appears from their inviting non-Episcopal ministers to their pulpits. Many instances of such practice might be here adduced.\* But it would be superfluous after what Dr. Tyng has written on the subject. I refer you to his conclusive letter, to be satisfied that if in the point under consideration we have violated the Canon, we are not without respectable and ample precedent. The most that can be said is that we departed from *usage*—the usage particularly of this Diocese. But of that our own Diocesan had just afforded us a striking example. After his allowing the performance of the Greek priest, (referred to in a preceding note,) it seemed a small matter in us to ask a sermon of a Presbyterian divine. There is no lack of instances of Presbyterian preaching in the history of the English Church; but in vain shall we search

his assuming any responsibility for its peculiar features. Yet he could not have been ignorant what it was, and he has not since condemned it. He has not said of it as he has of the service for the Germans in the Church of the Holy Communion, that it shall never again have his consent. He says it is not likely to be repeated. A little more than likely.

\* A quotation from an old record is not inopportune here. Referring to the consecration of Zion, a Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, 1769, it says: "On the second day of the solemnities, the services were according to the Liturgy of the Church of England, and a sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Peters, a clergyman of that Church, (one of the three ministers of Christ Church and St. Peter's, Philadelphia.) Several other Episcopal ministers were present on the occasion, at the conclusion of which the Rector Muhlenberg, who had delivered the sermon the first day, addressed the congregation, and in the name of the corporation of Zion Church, adverted to the many kind proofs of sympathy they had received during the three years in which they had worshipped in a building belonging to the Episcopals, and the additional gratification they had just experienced in the services conducted by their Episcopal brethren."

When, as a great-grandson of the above-named rector, I was invited to preach at the restoration of one of his old churches in Pennsylvania, in 1860, both Bishop Alonzo Potter and Bishop Bowman approved of my accepting the invitation, aware of the devotional services of the occasion being conducted by Lutheran clergymen.

Bishop White, when I was with him, would not repeat the confirmation of persons coming into our Church who had been confirmed in the Lutheran Church. He spoke of those who held to the necessity of doing so, and who nullified all non-Episcopal ordination, as *New Lights*. Some allowance must be made for my schooling under that Patriarch of our Church.

that history to find a Bishop lending a church or chapel of his Diocese for such an Office as that celebrated by Father Agapins. Most objectionable as it was, we were not sorry for its permission, *in so far* as it was a tacit yielding of the ground we claimed. A minister not of this Church officiated in one of our churches with the Bishop's hearty approbation. We felt sure that now he would not interpose when we proceeded in a like manner to step out of the ordinary course of things, practically using the liberty which we believed always had been lawfully ours. We flattered ourselves he would be impartial. We could not imagine that he would so cheerfully grant an indulgence to brethren of one school of theology and deny it to those of another school equally tolerated by the Church. To be sure the Oriental officiator had Episcopal ordination—the Presbyterian had not. But is that fact every thing? Is not the character of their officiating to be taken into the account? Was a service the like to which has never been seen in a Protestant place of worship, with a mutilation of one of the Creeds, really more homogeneous with our Protestant Church than a sound discourse on a text from St. Paul? Suppose that each should be repeated for a succession of Sundays in our churches, which would do the most violence to our feelings as Protestant Episcopalians—of Churchmen, if you please?

Departure from usage in the Church, though not against law, I grant is not in itself desirable. Some good end should be in view. The Pastoral imagines none on our part. It hints at our "rushing out of our legitimate sphere and violating the laws of that sphere," as if we delighted in lawlessness for its own sake. It discerns in us "the mere promptings of sentiment and self-will, entitled to no respect." With such a construction of our conduct, we may be thankful that it deals with us as patiently as it does.

You, my dear Doctor, do discover an end in view. You say: "This movement means, and every body knows it, that the Protestant Episcopal Church shall recognize the validity of non-Episcopal Orders." I deny, for my part, that it means any such thing. We are satisfied with all that the Church says of Episcopal ordination in any of her documents wherein she declares herself on the subject. We do not wish them altered. You are entitled to your interpretation of these documents, and we claim to be equally entitled to ours. You act on your interpretation, and carry it out so far, that you will have no fellowship with non-Episcopal minis-



ters, even in their capacity as preachers of the Gospel. You may be as exclusive as you please, only you must not insist on our being equally so, as long as the exclusiveness of the Church, asserted by you is an open question. Let us each go on our own way. Do not try to force us into your way, and then say, because we can't see with your eyes, that we are a set of law-breakers. This is not kind. It is not brotherly. Since we do not think alike on the subject which divides us, let us hope that good will come out of our diversity. We may keep one another in check. You may rein in our freedom, which perhaps might else go too far, and we may withhold you from an opposite extreme, if indeed you have not already attained it. Those here who think with you, have the Bishop on their side. But they ought not to have taken advantage of that. They ought not to have gotten him to write a letter at us. That was not fair. I wish, as I have already said, that he had brought some of us together, heard us argue the matter in good humor—perhaps at his own dinner-table—and then sum up, not only as an impartial judge, but as the affectionate father; other than which we know he cannot be.

#### No. IV.

One among the things which we hope to gain by this movement as you call it, is the allowance of our liberty as individual ministers, practically to acknowledge our brethren not of this Church, who are yet one with us in declaring the everlasting Gospel. This end can be attained whether this Church, as such, acknowledges them or not. We have no wish to bring them in as ministers at our altars, without Episcopal ordination, any more than they have to come in *with* such ordination. Both parties are satisfied with their Church position, but that does not hinder their fellowship in their Gospel position, because in that they are on the same ground. A right understanding of the mutual relations of Evangelicism and Ecclesiasticism would, I am persuaded, do away with our difficulties in candid and honest minds. This is a subject which has yet to be studied. To lead brethren of both schools in our Church to give it their thoughts is another gain we calculate on from this "movement." And I would now employ my pen in doing what I could for its elucidation, but I must go on with the Pastoral, for the reasons with which I began these letters.

Canon XX. says : " Every minister shall, before all sermons and lectures, and on all other occasions of public worship, use the Book of Common Prayer, as the same is, or may be established by the authority of the General Convention of this Church ; and in performing such service no other prayers shall be used than those in said book." We will take the latter clause first. This, understood literally, without limitation, is a most extraordinary Church law—no one would venture to call it a Gospel law. It is a piece of legislation unparalleled in the Catholic Church. Where, but in our statute-book, is an enactment to be found prohibiting a minister of Christ, assembled with his people for divine worship, or for the delivery of a sermon or lecture on any occasion whatever, from putting up a solitary petition to God which is not authoritatively prescribed to him ? No matter what may be the emergency, no matter how full his heart, or their hearts may be on some solemn theme which he has brought before them, or with some subject of momentous interest to the community at large, impelling them to cry to Heaven, he, as their organ of utterance, must be silent, unless he can vent himself in the stereotyped phrase lying before him. The Bible might supply him, but the very prayers of inspiration are forbidden, except as they also form part of the ritual. Where but with us is there such bondage in worship—if, indeed, we are so bound ? The Roman Catholic clergy, after the canon of the Mass, and the offices of the Breviary, are untrammelled in their religious services with their congregation. Witness their numerous litanies, which their people meet to recite in their churches,—with or without a priest—and their fervent acts of devotion for the Holy Week, suited to the different stages of the history of the Passion. We recoil from their ecclesiastical slavery, but in this point, compared with us, if the law be as is said, they are free. Here common-sense and Scriptural liberty interpose. They reject such rigid and heartless understanding of the law. The opinion is extensively held and acted on, that the restriction of the canon bears only on the services *before* the sermon.\* Hence the practice with so many of our clergy of free prayer in the pulpit, in conformity with that of the clergy of the Church of England ever since the Reformation. We find prayers before the sermons by some of her best divines. Bishop

\* In the Liturgy, the sermon is part of the Communion office. Are we, then, at liberty in prayer in that office after the sermon ?

Hall, in answering certain objections to fixed forms of worship, admits they would have force if we were exclusively bound to such forms—which he strenuously denies—and says, if I recollect aright, that no one is so foolish as to assert it. Bishop White, in the beginning of my ministry under him, recommended me to add something to the Collect, after the sermon, adapted to its subject, which at that time he did himself. The most learned of our Bishops—a leading High-Church mind—maintains that after the prescriptions of the Liturgy are satisfied, there is no bar to other acts of prayer and praise, original or selected, provided, of course, that they be not dissonant with the Liturgy. Such admissions hardly consist with the letter of the canon, but they show that its letter is untenable. Almost any interpretation is welcome that rids us of a gag-law in prayer. Not so thinks the Pastoral. It enforces the canon in its utmost stringency. “The Church,” it says, “is severe in the provisions which she makes for securing absolute uniformity of worship.” One would hardly imagine that all these severe provisions, on which the Pastoral is so emphatic, and on which it goes on to dilate, are to be found exclusively in this solitary canon, and to be found there only by putting a prohibitory meaning on its language almost universally rejected. In vain do we look for any of these severe provisions in the Prayer-Book. That keeps within the limit of its prerogative. It dictates what shall be said, and there stops. It prescribes, but does not proscribe. It does not forbid the utterance of any words whatever beyond its own. But that, you answer, is implied. Not so. When our Lord said, “When we pray, say Our Father,” we do not understand Him as enjoining exclusively that prayer, which, from its perfection, might, if any prayer might, be our sole liturgy. The Church, then, surely would not go beyond her Lord, and say of *her* “form of sound words,” Thus, and thus alone, shall ye pray. No, no. It is the canon, in its hard sense, not the dear old Prayer-Book, which knows the Bible too well to abridge our Bible rights.

“The Church will not,” adds the Pastoral, “allow her children to be disturbed in their solemn acts of worship by the intrusion of novel forms or expressions. She leaves nothing to the fancy or caprice of the officiating minister.” A paraphrase of the same canon. But why should ministers, in using their privilege in prayer, be thought of only as intruding “novel forms and expressions,” and following their “fancy or caprice”? Have they

learned nothing by the use of the Prayer-Book? Has it no educational power? Does it not teach *how* as well as *what* to pray? "Nothing can be more clear and absolute than the law which the Church has ordained, and undoubtedly means to enforce." "The only exception is the permission given to the Bishop, and only to the Bishop, to set forth temporarily prayers for special and extraordinary occasions." Suppose the Bishop fails to do so, are we then to be all dumb in public prayer on all such "special and extraordinary occasions"? As the Pastoral is so strong and emphatic on this point, it must aim at some recent and marked offences of the kind in view. Whoever have been the offenders, they are not likely to be oppressed with any grievous sense of guilt. They may appeal to the common-sense and the common heart of Christianized humanity. They may challenge the production of a single adverse text of Holy Writ. As to Holy Writ, however, the Pastoral is remarkably barren of its language on this or any of the subjects of its complaints. Perhaps its reference here is to the praying of some of us, as we were moved, during the rebellion. But how, if we had any souls to move us, or if we had any faith in prayer, could we refrain? When the news ever and anon came of the slaughter of thousands and tens of thousands of our countrymen, of our fellow-citizens, of our neighbors, should we have ignored it in our addresses to the Most High? Should we have had nothing to say in behalf of the dying, the wounded, the agonizing weltering in the gore of the battle-field, with all its horrors before our eyes? Nothing in behalf of the stricken homes, the Rachels weeping for their children, the wives suddenly made widows, the little ones made fatherless, while we heard their wailing and lamentation over the land, South as well as North? Should all our sympathies have been confined to a brief word of an adapted Collect? Should none but every-day and general petitions\* go up from our lips, to mingle with the sighing of our prisoners to the Father of Mercies? and all because the Prayer-Book or the Bishop gave us nothing wherewith at such times, to come before the Lord? When the whole country reeled as the lightning flashed through it the terrific word of the murder of the President, and we bowed in our

\* It may be said that we may make mental and particular applications of the general petitions of the Liturgy, especially those all-embracing ones of the Litany. Very true. So we can when prayers are asked for a sick person, or for one going to sea, but people will have the special prayer.



sanctuaries before the Sovereign Disposer of events, should we have stifled our hearts and uttered no supplications dictated by that event in His providence, crushing the heart of millions, and changing, for aught we knew, the whole current of our nation's fortunes? No earnest cries, that out of that darkness He would bring light; no litany, that the people might learn what He would teach them by that undreamed-of reverse of His hand? No prayer extraordinary for the Magistrate suddenly lifted to supreme command, that he might be endowed with wisdom extraordinary for his new and tremendous responsibilities, and that he might call to him counsellors seeking counsel of God? Nothing—nothing at all out of the ordinary routine, but the “Prayer for Persons in Affliction,” commended to us on that occasion by our Diocesan!

But enough. This idea of not a syllable beyond the *litera scripta* under all circumstances, and “without exception,” is simply monstrous. Doubtless it is the Bishop's prerogative to set forth what he deems expedient for *all* the clergy and congregations of his diocese, but we have prerogatives also, as pastors of our own congregations,\* and liberty of prayer is one of them. Why do our bishops wish to monopolize it? To increase their responsibilities?

But one question more on the “absolute uniformity in worship,” which the Pastoral insists on so uncompromisingly. Is it a mark of catholic worship? On the contrary, is not such worship distinguished by its variety—its diversity in unity? If our Church ever become, as some hope, the one Church of the land, will the canon before us still keep its place, and be stringently enforced, so that “Dearly beloved Brethren,” *et seq., verbatim et literatim*, will be said or sung by all the myriads of worshippers from Maine to Texas—from the Atlantic to the Pacific? Yes, when all the trees of the forest are of one height, and their limbs, branches, twigs, and leaves are of the same size, form, and hue. But all

\* More than once persons, and they no loose Churchmen either, have thanked me and my brother of the Church of the Holy Communion, for prayers we had prepared and used in church, at different times during the war. Doubtless others have done the same. Would the Bishop have had it otherwise? would he have suppressed all occasional prayers during the war, but those set forth by himself? If so, then it would be his pleasure that in all that momentous period there was less turning to God with special supplications in his congregations than in any congregations of the land.

our bishops do not dream so horrid a dream. Some of them, of whom the last made has spoken out most distinctly from his warm heart, (may it never experience any churchy contraction!) would be satisfied if the Christian communions around us, adhering to the ancient creeds, would also receive the ancient episcopate, still maintaining their own forms of worship, etc. That was the idea of the Memorial, years ago. The Church as well as the world does move. Evangelical Catholicism will be understood some of these days.

### No. V.

The first part of this XXth. canon (which I will try to dispose of as briefly as possible) the Pastoral also interprets in the strictest sense—though, of all laws, purely ecclesiastical laws should have the most liberal construction. The letter of that law before us is: “Every minister shall, before all sermons and lectures, and on all other occasions of public worship, use the Book of Common Prayer, *as the same is or may be established by the General Convention of this Church.*” Accordingly, it is not sufficient that *some* prayers of the book—a suitable selection of them—be used before any sermon or lecture, as many suppose, who so far employ it, when its regular order would be impracticable, and believe that they thus satisfy the canon. It must be used “as established by the General Convention,” not only as a whole, but in all its parts, and according to its rubrics.\* Accordingly, the whole Morning or Evening Prayer must be celebrated every time a minister of our Church preaches the Gospel. That, however, is possible only in regular congregations of our

\* The rubrics are laws of the Church as binding as canons—even more so, for canons can be made or unmade at any one General Convention; but to abolish or change a rubric requires the action of two Conventions. Who among us keeps all these laws? Beginning at the first, the order for *Daily Morning Prayer*, proceeding through them all in the different offices; “The Order for the Visitation of the Sick and of Prisoners;” “Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea;” “Forms of Prayer to be used in Families;” who can avow his conformity throughout? A strict constructionist must contend for the equal obligation of them all. Usage, it may be said, suspends or modifies them; but usage is variable. I knew a clergyman who never visited a sick parishioner but on entering the house began with, “Peace be to this house,” etc.; and who in family prayers never used any other than those in the Prayer-Book—believing himself so bound by his ordination vows. The brethren aggrieved by our canonical transgressions are, it is hoped, “touching the righteousness which is in the law (of rubrics) blameless.”

Church ; because, as I have shown in a former letter, the rubric prescribes a joint service of the minister and people ; and such a joint service can take place only with our own people, none others being qualified for it. Hence it would follow, that canonically we are not at liberty to preach outside of our Church. This conclusion you would not admit—but it is fair ; of course it is absurd, and, therefore, the rigid construction of the canon which leads to it is also absurd.

There are, however, two methods by which the law may be literally complied with when we preach to outside congregations, suited to different classes of persons. First, those to whom the missionary goes with the message of salvation. He begins with giving them lessons in the Prayer-Book. Ere he stands up before them as an ambassador of Christ, he does the schoolmaster, and drills them in the words of the forms to be employed. But this might not always be practicable or convenient at every place where he would stop on his way, and deliver his Master's message ; or his hearers might be a motley crowd from the highways and hedges, not very apt in the use of books of any kind ; or, if he had the time, and they the wit, they might not be disposed for the preliminary teaching. As they had come to hear a sermon, they would expect him to set about it at once. To be sure, we cannot tell what difficulties might not be overcome by one in earnest in so primitive a method of preaching the Gospel—so very like that of the Apostles—and, therefore, so becoming our Apostolic Church ! But to be serious, is not this inverting the order of things ? Is it not, in homely phrase, putting the cart before the horse ? But the publishers of the Gospel do not engage in worship to draw men to their preaching—they preach to draw men to worship. We read of our Lord discoursing on the mountain, on the sea-shore, by the way-side, in the temple, and where not, but in no instance, of his first offering up prayers. So in the case of the Apostles. They held forth wherever they could get hearers, and met for prayer in private, with their fellow-believers. Hence, in organized assemblies of believers the order of the canon is not unscriptural.

Besides, is the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving which the Church has prepared as meet offering for her children, suited to a promiscuous gathering of the ignorant, or the unbelieving, or the profane ? Prayers, accompanying a discourse to these latter, will be rather *for* them than *with* them. Unbaptized, or making no

profession of faith or repentance, are they to be addressed as the beloved in Christ, and expected to join in the devotions of saints? To use the Prayer-Book at once with every multitude whom we may be called upon to exhort to an abandonment of their evil lives, might come near giving "that which is holy to the dogs." Does the canon require it?

Another class of persons to whom we may have occasion to preach, is that of enlightened Christian congregations not of our Church. With these the Prayer-Book may be used by having its order of worship printed and distributed among them, and by securing the attendance of a number of respondents in the congregation. With the understanding that such means would be taken to adhere to the canon, the Bishop sanctioned the preaching of two of our prominent clergy in "dissenting meeting-houses." Perhaps it was meant as a precedent for our direction, in like circumstances. It is very well if all parties concerned are satisfied. For my part, I am not inclined to follow it. I shall never preach to a congregation whose mode of worship I believe to be anti-Scriptural, unless to persuade them to adopt a Scriptural mode. If their prayers and praises, whatever be their forms, agree with the creed which they and I hold in common, that is enough. I could not be so sectarian as to insist on their coming into my ways, as a condition of ministering to them the Word of truth. Though *they* were content, still *I* would not be outdone by them in a catholic spirit. I would not have them say to me: "Proceed in your own fashion, if you must. We will do our best to fall in with it; only give us the Gospel, to which we know there is nothing contrary in your Liturgy." Nor would I seem to contradict the very words with which our Church begins the Prayer-Book: "It is a most invaluable part of that blessed liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, that in His worship different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the faith be kept entire." Further, it is unfavorable to the devotion of a congregation to adopt for a single occasion a ritual service to which they are unaccustomed. Their attention is drawn off by the novelty, from what should absorb their thoughts; and surely it is better that they should be really worshipping in their own way, than seeming to worship in our way. Our service used under such circumstances, is not likely to be a reality—and the homeliest reality in worship is better far than the goodliest unreality.



There is another consideration. Non-Episcopal congregations in their organized capacity you deem schismatical; why then are our ministers allowed to preach to them at all, except for the avowed purpose of reclaiming them from schism? How does the use of the Prayer-Book mend the matter? Rather it makes it worse, so far as reality, again, is concerned. It looks as if you were quite at peace with them, and considered them altogether qualified for the worship of those who are in full communion with the Church. Or has it the special virtue of making them good Churchmen, for the nonce? Is such the *opus operatum* of the Prayer-Book?\*

When some of us officiated in our neighbors' pulpits, we confined ourselves to the duty of the pulpit; we did not go to liturgize—to do the office of a bishop, priest, or deacon, but simply and exclusively to deliver a sermon.† We minded our own business. The worship was in other hands. If they did not conduct it canonically, they, not we, were to be called to account. But for this *we* are called to account. This is the gravamen of our offense. "There seemed," says the Pastoral, "to be an express design to unite with the ministers of other bodies in the same services." Unquestionably there was such design. Our object was to show openly our communion with our brethren holding and declaring with us "the faith once delivered to the saints."

\* "Can you" (as one facetiously remarked, alluding to the Evening Prayer on fly-leaves scattered through the pews) "lay the schism devil with a little printer's ink?"

† One of these occasions was Good Friday afternoon, 1864. For a fortnight previous I had spent much time in obtaining the signatures of a large number of the clergy of various denominations, to a circular recommending the observance of that day, both for its commemoration and for the purpose of manifesting the unity of Christians in the doctrines of the Cross. Nearly everywhere I met with the most cordial welcome. A few days before the fast, Dr. Adams, who had taken a lead in furthering the movement, said to me: "Will you not now come and finish your work by preaching in my church on Good Friday afternoon, when a number of clergy and people of other congregations will be present?" A small reply would it not have been had I said: "Yes, on condition that you allow me to conduct all the worship myself, and according to the forms of my own Church." I shall never forget that solemnized and thronged assembly. Never did I so feel the reality of my office as a preacher of the Crucified. It was the happiest Good Friday of my life. Subsequently, I preached twice on Sunday evenings in the same church, leaving the service to the pastor. This I was aware the Bishop did not affection; but I had no idea that he thought it unlawful. I was greatly surprised to find him considering it such in his Pastoral.

What canon does that break? Perchance it violates one of those *principles* of the Church which the Pastoral so frequently refers to, as well as to its laws; but as it specifies only laws, I do not know which principle of the Church is here concerned.

After all this explaining away of the canon, as it may seem, you may ask, What does it amount to? what is its purpose? A very important one, namely, to establish the Prayer-Book—to obligate the clergy to the use of it. Without this act of legislation I do not know that we should be bound to it as we now are in conducting public worship. In that view, it is one of the most important of the canons; and such it is, considered as an imperative law for all the times and occasions to which the Prayer-Book is adapted, and for which it shows itself to be designed. Thus understood, the canon has all its scope without being strained in its application to times, circumstances, and places beyond the contemplation of those who enacted it, and beyond the capabilities of the Book. Those capabilities it may be presumed have a limit, notwithstanding the opinions of some that they are universal.

As to the penalties attached to the breaking of this or any of the canons in question, we need not have been reminded of them. We are law-abiding men, and that for conscience' sake. We have no dread of admonition, suspension, or degradation, though in fact the first we have had already. For any such offences as we are charged with, or for any repetition of them, we have no fear that we shall be "ungowned" for a while or for ever. The time has gone by for that; indeed, in our Church it has never been. Imagine it otherwise, dear Doctor, if you can. Imagine a number of brethren accused, tried, and convicted of the offences in question. Bring the court before your eyes. The convicts are at the bar awaiting their sentence. As in civil courts, the impartial judge will give the culprit the benefit of all that can be said in his favor, the judge ecclesiastical in this case could not do less. On the contrary, he would give the offenders their utmost due. Fancy him, then, addressing them somewhat thus: We do not charge you with any want of fidelity in your ministry; you have preached no unsound doctrine; you have declared the truths of the Gospel, and doubtless not in vain; you have been faithful and diligent pastors; you have (in different degrees, according to your several gifts) fed and tended your flocks with a loving care, for which you have their love in return. As to your Sunday services, we cannot deny that you have conducted them uniformly, ac-

eording to the Liturgy—some of your eongregations are remarka-  
 bly well trained to its order. Your candidates for confirmations  
 have been well prepared ; your communicants are numerous, and  
 we believe as exemplary as any others. Nothing can be said  
 against you on any such score. In justice, too, we must add that  
 you always liberally aided the missions and eharities of the  
 Church. Indeed, your whole clerical and pastoral eareer has had  
 our approbation. But not having the fear of the canon before  
 your eyes, and instigated by “the mere prompting of sentiment  
 and self-will,” you have brought men with no orders into your  
 pulpits ; or you have put up prayers not found in the liturgy, nor  
 set forth by the Bishop ; or you have preached while ministers  
 unknown to this Church have prayed, and that “with the express  
 design of uniting with them in the same serviees.” For these  
 acts, especially for that first mentioned—“a flagrant violation of  
 the spirit and intent of our law”—you are sentenced to a suspen-  
 sion of your ministry for —— months. That is, (if the judge has  
 the grace to go on and say what the sentencee means,) you must  
 eease preaching the Gospel ; you must forbear ealling sinners to  
 repentanee, and seeking to save the lost ; stop at once all minis-  
 terial teaching, warning, and exhortation ; separate yourselves from  
 your flocks, though you leave them like sheep without a shepherd ;  
 quit every Church work you have begun ; above all, dare not to  
 touch the altar with hands which you have given in fellowship to  
 sehismaties ; open not in the sanetuary the lips that have been  
 profaned with self-dictated prayer. Retire into solitude, and may  
 it lead you to see the error of your ways. To that end we pre-  
 sent each of you with a *Digest of the Canons*, and may you in-  
 wardly digest it yourselves.

“Devoutly read therein by day,  
 And meditate by night.”

“Quite amusing,” you say ; “but what sort of Christian minis-  
 ters,” you ask, “would *they* they be who would give up preach-  
 ing, the care of their flocks, and all that, though only for a period,  
 rather than some notions or practiees, for which they can hardly  
 plead a sense of duty ? Strange consciences theirs, if for the sake  
 of such things they could be reconeiled to a suspension of their  
 sacred calling.”

I grant it, if that was their only alternative ; but the Acts of  
 the Apostles suggests another. “They which were scattered



abroad upon the persecution which arose about Stephen, went everywhere preaching the Word." So these ministers, silenced at home, might at once set out as missionaries, supported, as doubtless they would be, by their people. They would not for the while be priests or deacons in the Church; but what would hinder their being evangelists at large? They might labor in destitute regions—gather congregations for the Church—or devote themselves to making collections, say for Diocesan Missions, or the Episcopal Fund, for all which the Bishop would not think them so very naughty as to prolong their suspension. If on resuming their places they also resumed their irregularities, it is not likely he would try them over again and suspend them—unless he thought it a good way of making missionaries or Church agents.

But my pen won't keep serious, so I had better stop.

## No. VI.

The official subscription of the Pastoral (the Bishop of New-York) is consistent and significant. It is not an abbreviation of "Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New-York." It is designed. Had the author adopted the latter title, it would have been a tacit recognition of other Protestant churches round about—those "respective churches," referred to in the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer. Now, if these be really churches of Christ, their ministers must also be ministers of Christ; and any act of fellowship with them on our part would be a violation only of our peculiar laws. Granting that for the present, still they would be nothing more. They would be minor illegalities, but not grave transgressions. They would be offences against conventional order, and would be estimated differently by different minds. A Bishop, looking at them in that light, would not characterize them as a disregard of solemn obligations. He would know how to understand them without such severity of judgment. He would never think of issuing pastorals against them—that is, supposing he considered himself the chief pastor and overseer of but one communion of Christ, in the midst of others—the Bishop of one church, having the episcopate, aside of other churches not having that government and order, yet, nevertheless, true churches. But suppose the Prayer-Book (the preface is placed among its contents) is wrong. Suppose that these non-episcopal churches are on that



account no true churches of Christ—their ministers no ministers of Christ—then our fraternizing with their ministers, our consorting with them, are something else than infractions of order. They are that; but they are vastly more. They show a fellowship with bodies which are in a state of schism, continuing in it, persistently separating themselves from the Church. Our countenancing them, our bringing their preachers into our pulpits, is to encourage them in their alienation from the one fold of Christ. Canonical delinquencies in the premises become ecclesiastical crimes and partake of the guilt of schism. Now, this is the hypothesis of the author of the Pastoral, which he indicates by signing himself “Bishop of New-York.” To leave us in no doubt he says, that “in his official capacity he knows no ministers outside of the Episcopal Church;” and what his official capacity is, appears from his title—Bishop of New-York—that is, Bishop of the Church in New-York. Accordingly, the Episcopal Church is *the* Church in New-York—all the other Protestant bodies (however sound in the faith and Scriptural in doctrine) are as bodies out of the Church. Their ministry is no true ministry of the Church. The Bishop will not know it. He believes it has no authority from Christ. No wonder then that he deprecates any thing that looks like an acknowledgment of it. No wonder he does all he can to prevent it—that he puts the strictest sense on the law. He would thus strengthen the safeguards of the Church. He would protect his clergy and people against the sin and peril of that against which, together with heresy, we are continually putting up our prayers. He practically carries out his theory. He is consistent on the ground which he occupies. He is unquestionably right.

But now the question occurs, How does he come to occupy that ground? In other words, How has he become Bishop of New-York? Let it be granted, if you will, that he is a Bishop in virtue of apostolical descent, who has given him “New-York” (whatever geographical territory that includes) for his jurisdiction? How has that been made the province of his Episcopal rule? Has it been with the consent, or by any action of The Church, that is, the whole body of the baptized, or the whole congregation of the faithful in New-York? Certainly not. They do not know him, or any one else, as their Bishop. Whatever be his jurisdiction, he has derived it from those who elected, or those who consecrated him Bishop, or from both together. But

these were delegates and Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church only, who therefore could not convey jurisdiction beyond the bounds of that Church, and who have nowhere put it on record that they *meant* to convey such jurisdiction. A Bishop's letters of consecration certify to his being duly made the Bishop of a certain Diocese which is the aggregate of the Protestant Episcopal congregations within a certain State or part of a State which gives the name to the Diocese. When he writes himself Bishop of the Diocese of ———, it is the same as Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in ———. To assert himself Bishop of a region in which there are hundreds of thousands of Christians with their churches and ministers, who have never placed themselves, nor been placed by any authority, civil or ecclesiastical, under his jurisdiction, is simply an assumption—of course not *personal* assumption. I need not stop to disclaim the thought of imputing any thing of that kind to our Diocesan — among his clergy ever modestly *primus inter pares*. It is an official or rather theoretical assumption. It belongs to a school or party in the Church, one of whose distinctive principles is the denial of the authority of all ministers not episcopally commissioned, and who carry it out in claiming for our Bishops (what, however, they do not all claim for themselves) the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the States in which they have been made Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church. This is their dogma and their application of it. It is that of the author of the Pastoral. He conscientiously believes in it, and accordingly writes himself Bishop of New-York. It is no dogma of ours. We believe that there are true ministers of Christ who have not had Episcopal ordination or commission, and who are rightfully independent of him whom *we* own as lawfully “over *us* in the Lord.” Now, our acting on this belief would not, *in itself*, be a cause of offence to a Bishop simply of the Protestant Episcopal Church, but very naturally it is an offence to the Bishop of New-York, for it acknowledges men to be ministers of Christ who do not acknowledge him their Bishop. Hence the present trouble. Evidently it comes from the Bishop's acting on a creed which is his, and not ours. If we believed with him, we should require no canons to keep us apart from our non-Episcopal brethren. The law of Christ would restrain us. So on the other hand, if he believed with us, while he might counsel us against infringements of our rules, (if so they be,) he would not condemn them as things essentially wrong. He would

not imply that they were violations of the law of Christ—which he does in his Pastoral.

In a word, it is a battle of opinions, and of the practical applications of them. Which is right, the Church has left an open question.

In conclusion, allow a few reflections suggested by our last topic.

How strange it seems, when we seriously think of it, that any of our right reverend fathers should affect office beyond that which by common consent is theirs? Is not that full enough for their ability? Why do they claim the bishopric of great regions, when in view of what they owe only to their own congregations therein, they exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Why do they wish to increase so immensely their responsibilities? Surely it cannot be in view of the Day of account. Instead of contending so earnestly that they alone have the rightful charge of a flock of Christ, a tithe of which they can never know, one would suppose it would be the contrary, and that they would be glad to discover, if any how they could, that such charge is not theirs—that they would rather welcome than repel any arguments to prove that others beside them and theirs have part in the Gospel ministry, and so be relieved of a load of duty which, if felt, must crush them to the earth. Well might they say *nolo episcopari*, with such an *episcopari*.

But I may be reminded there is another view of the subject. Our good fathers who believe that such exclusive authority is theirs, feel bound to bear their testimony to the fact, whether men will hear or forbear. In conscience they must assert their Apostolic rule over the population of their respective States, although but a moiety thereof submit to it, patiently waiting for the time when it will be duly acknowledged. It is theirs to bear witness to the primitive and divine order of the Church, never doubting its ultimate restoration.

Adopting that view of the subject, ought they then not to bear their testimony in some living and practical way, which would show them in earnest about it? If they really want to convince men of their apostolic rights, ought they to confine their ministrations to those who do not dispute them? Desiring as small dioceses as might be, ought they not to go freely among "all sorts and conditions of men," and win them over by their apostolic labors among them? Instead of shunning all churches but their

own, should they not seek and take every opportunity they can get of visiting the congregations of "all who profess and call themselves Christians," and of being heard in their pulpits—not just to declare the divine right of episcopacy, but the substance of the faith, the great doctrines of the Gospel in which all are agreed, and which, on their own showing, Episcopacy was ordained to propagate and conserve? Instead of frowning on their clergy preaching in "conventicles," unless with all their paraphernalia, to look as Episcopalian as possible, ought they not to encourage them to proclaim the Word of truth everywhere and anyhow; to be all things to all men for the great purpose of winning souls to Christ, trusting that the souls so won would see in them the Shepherds of the true Fold? Would not this (if I am not too bold in putting such questions) be a more hopeful method of bringing men over to Episcopacy, than maintaining an attitude of indifference toward them; simply asserting its claims, or arguing it from the Holy Scriptures and ancient fathers; ignoring all ministers, sound or unsound in doctrine alike, who lack episcopal ordination; making apostolicity of orders, as it is called, the *sine qua non* of the Gospel ministry; as if such apostolicity were every thing, and apostolicity in faith and doctrine, apostolicity in charity and good works, apostolicity in zeal and labors for Christ's sake, apostolicity in turning sinners to righteousness, apostolicity in life and conversation, and every thing of that sort, were all comparatively nothing as notes of Christ's ministers—notwithstanding it is thus that He himself teaches us to distinguish them: "Ye shall know them by their *fruits*."

W. A. M.